

## Wargaming

### Background

Wargaming employs highly flexible exploratory and assessment methodologies that can address a broad range of issues involving varying degrees of conflict. These tend to focus on war and war-related matters, but can include many issues outside the scope of war proper. For example, gaming methodologies have proven particularly useful in addressing the complexities of fire and rescue operations, and WMD incident response. An operational definition of "wargaming" is *"the artificial replication of a situation of competition or conflict not involving actual military force that is characterized by human decision-making which impacts the course of events throughout. It revolves around the interaction of two or more opposing forces*

*guided by predetermined objectives, rules, data, and procedures designed to depict an actual or assumed real world situation."*

Wargaming is especially useful in generating, refining, and assessing concepts, plans, decision alternatives, issues and technologies; identifying capabilities and deficiencies; reducing surprises; and creating conditions which allow risk-taking difficult to reproduce in experimentation, exercises or operations.

### Key Programs

The Marine Corps Wargaming Program, executed by the Wargaming Division of the Lab, is a comprehensive and multifaceted effort focused on concept, policy, and operational exploration at several levels: Title X Wargaming, Joint Concept Development and Experimentation (JCDE) and external gaming efforts, and a broad and diverse array of Service programs. This scope is illustrated in the graphic below, and



described in more detail in the following sections.

## Title X Wargaming

Title X Wargaming consists of two broad components. The first is the management, oversight, and assessment of Marine Corps participation in other service-sponsored Title X War Games. The second is the execution and assessment of the Marine Corps' Title X Wargaming Program, ***Expeditionary Warrior (EW)***. Title X War Games generally address future visions and capabilities in the context of core Title X responsibilities of organizing, training, and equipping forces to execute each Service's statutory roles and functions. Title X War Games, sponsored at high levels within each Service, are Joint in that they involve participation by all the Services and Combatant Commands as appropriate, and, in some cases, are cosponsored by a Service and Joint Forces Command (JFCOM). Finally, these programs are expected to have major implications for the future direction and capabilities of the sponsoring Service.

Current other-Service Title X Wargaming Programs managed on behalf of the Marine Corps comprise the Army's ***Unified Quest (UQ) Series***, co-sponsored with JFCOM, the Air Force's tandem ***Unified Engagement (UE)*** and ***Futures Capabilities Series***, the former co-sponsored with JFCOM, and the Navy's ***Unified Course (UC) Series***, again co-sponsored with JFCOM. These are large annual programs, each with a pathway cycle of 8-10 months.



In June 2002, the Commandant of the Marine Corps officially approved the re-establishment of a Marine Corps

Title X Wargaming Program (in the late-1980s and early-1990s the Marine Corps had pioneered what today is termed "Title X" gaming with the **CMC Policy and Strategy War Game Series**). As noted, the new program is designated ***Expeditionary Warrior*** and is designed differently than other-Service Title X programs. It is intended to provide a highly flexible venue to address issues of pressing concern to the leadership of the Marine Corps. The first event in the program, ***EW 03***, was conducted in November 2002, and focused on USMC-SOCOM interoperability in conducting preemptive operations in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) as articulated in the *National Security Strategy (NSS)* of September 2002. ***EW 04*** was conducted in October 2003, and continued and extended the work of ***EW 03*** in exploring the interoperability of USMC and SOCOM forces within the same context of the GWOT and the *NSS*. ***EW 05*** was conducted in December 2004 and provided a detailed look at the draft Marine Corps Distributed Operations concept. ***EW 06*** is scheduled for 22-27 January 2006 and will inform concept development aimed at countering irregular threats, as well as broader range of Small Wars related issues.

## Joint Concept Development and Experimentation (JCDE) War Games

The major Marine Corps JCDE program line – ***Joint Urban Warrior (JUW)*** was developed in response to JFCOM's designation as the DOD Executive Agent for Joint Urban Operations (JUO). Due to the deep well of urban wargaming and experimentation experience in MCWL, Wargaming Division formulated the ***JUW*** program concept as the annual USMC contribution to the JUO initiative, as well as to provide an institutionalized venue in

which to examine complex urban operations in a Joint, Interagency, and Multinational context. From its inception, *JUW* was conceived as a co-sponsored program between the USMC and JFCOM. Two significant events marked the beginning of this program - *Emerald Express (EE) 03 and 04-1*. They were designed to establish a



foundation or baseline for future *JUW* events from lessons learned in recent operations involving urban warfare - Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi

Freedom (OIF). *EE 04-2* expanded the program into the realm of Interagency operations by focusing on that dimension with regard to ORHA / CPA during OIF. *Emerald Express*, focused on insights and observations from real-world operations, is a long-standing component of the *Small Wars Center of Excellence*, and a major component of the *JUW* Pathway.

## External War Games

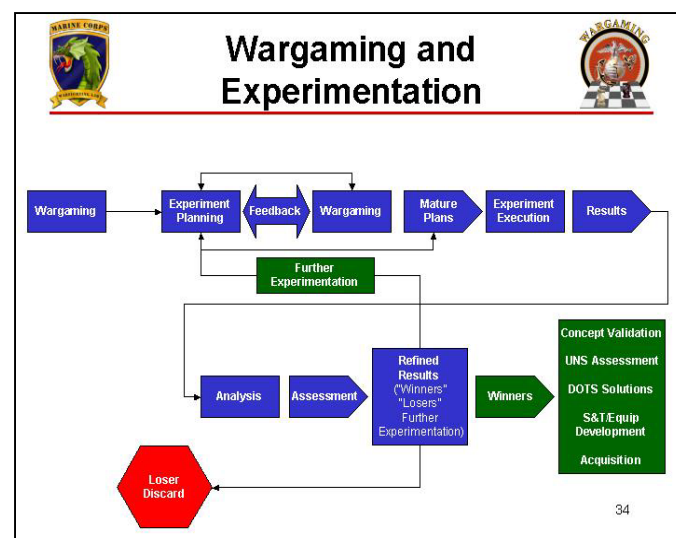
External Wargaming Programs are a broader and less well-defined aspect of the USMC Wargaming effort. Among the many examples of these games are the *Special Operations Command (SOCOM) War Game Series*, and *Thor's Hammer*, cosponsored by Strategic Command (STRATCOM) and JFCOM, as well as relevant gaming efforts of other Services not encompassed by Title X or JCDE Programs.

## Marine Corps Wargaming Programs

Marine Corps wargaming programs embrace an extensive array of activities that are planned and executed by the Wargaming Division. As such, they are Marine Corps

initiatives even though many include Joint, interagency, and even non-governmental participation.

**Service Experimentation Wargaming** functions as a means of exploring, vetting, and assessing issues prior to the commitment of resources to live experimentation. A component of the MCWL Innovation and Experimentation (I&E) Process, Service Experimentation Wargaming occurs at the front-end of an experimentation track in order to assess concepts, issues, etc. that shape the direction of the track as a whole. Additionally, the wargaming component could “game” the experimentation plan for refinement and possible modification. And, depending on time and resources, the experiment itself could be conflated into the wargaming component. Since the inception of MCWL in 1995, most major experimentation programs have contained a wargaming component. Most recently, *Sea Viking 04* and *Sea Viking 06* have involved wargaming in their formative stages. The following graphic illustrates the role of wargaming in the I&E process.



**Culebra Series.** This dimension of the USMC Wargaming Program is focused on a broad and eclectic range of expeditionary

warfare issues related to developing distinctive USMC force capabilities. This includes concept development, doctrine refinement, and the identification and refinement of critical capabilities. **Culebra** often connects with and leverages Title X programs. Some of its more prominent initiatives include the recently completed Autonomic Logistics (AL) War Game with Marine Corps Systems Command, the *Sea II* Program that resulted directly in the revision of *Joint Publication 3-02: Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations*, and any number of efforts directed at core USMC expeditionary warfighting capabilities.

## Small Wars Center for Excellence (COE)

In early 1999, the Commandant tasked the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory (MCWL) with establishing a Marine Corps Operations Other Than War (OOTW) Center of Excellence (COE). The basis for this organization was *Exercise Emerald Express*, a program implemented by the CG, I MEF in 1995, which was the first large-scale interagency Operations Other Than War (OOTW) exercise that attempted to address the issues from a holistic perspective, integrating all their complex and multifaceted components. That integrated, interagency approach has remained the guiding framework for the ongoing Emerald Express conference program, as well as for the activities of the now Small War Center of Excellence. The COE's broad mission is to provide a forum of information for the understanding, history, and challenges presented by the Marine Corps's involvement in Small Wars, to explore innovative Small wars concepts, and tactics,



techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and to address Small Wars policy, doctrine, and key programs where appropriate. These mission elements are expanded by several key supporting functions: to identify insights and issues from Small Wars operations; to maintain a cultural intelligence information base, to conduct Small Wars conferences, war games, etc., and to coordinate with other Small Wars-related conferences, war games, and related events involving other Services, Combatant Commands, Government Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Private Volunteer Organizations (PVOs). Key COE programs comprise:

- ***Small Wars Center of Excellence Web Site.*** Designed to provide “one stop shopping” for the multifaceted scope of Small Wars research and activities, the site features over 1000 vetted links, including a search engine replete with journal articles, book recommendations, after-action reports, and lessons learned from recent operations, an expanding collection of cultural intelligence reports and links, and extensive links to other Small Wars-related organizations and web sites. Much of the material on the site is password protected. Access requirements and procedures are available on the site.
- ***Emerald Express*** is a continuing series of conferences and workshops designed to quickly garner critical insights and issues from recent operations and directly distribute the results as widely as possible. Participants are typically commanders and senior staff of units that have participated in operations under scrutiny, as well as relevant interagency and non-governmental organizations. *EE* is, by definition, joint and interagency, as well as increasingly combined in scope,



and is conducted regularly based on the availability of appropriate participants as opposed to a set schedule. Recent *EE* events have addressed urban operations in OIF I & II, the interagency dimensions of OIF, humanitarian assistance and stability and support operations in OIF, and USMC and Royal Marine operations in OEF.

- **Cultural Intelligence Seminars** seek to provide a “missing piece” to conventional military planning by focusing on both the complexities and nuances of indigenous cultures, as well as the “actual” network of power and influence operating beneath the “line and block charts.” While the principal beneficiaries are Marine and other Service organizations, participants are drawn primarily from interagency organizations (DOS, USAID, etc) and NGOs. Cultural Intelligence Seminars have addressed Cuba, Haiti, Indonesia, Kosovo, Colombia, Somalia, Rwanda, Urban Warfare, and central Africa. Cultural Intelligence reports remain among the most requested items from the Small Wars COE web site, attesting to the importance and success of this program.

**Homeland Defense.** This component of the USMC Wargaming Program focuses on the multifaceted issues of military support to civil authority in several contexts.

- Prominent in this regard is the **Metropolitan Critical Infrastructure Protection (MCIP)** initiative in support of the Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations (PP&O). This has included a significant wargaming effort with the New York Police Department, the City of Seattle, and an August 2003 event in San Francisco.

Additionally, a tabletop war game is scheduled for October 2005 (exact date TBD) in New Orleans as part of the handover of the *MCIP* program to the cognizance of MARFORNORTH.

- Much of the context for the Homeland Defense effort has focused on chemical/biological incident response, particularly in antiterrorism scenarios that potentially involve the Marine Corps’ Chemical Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF). A number of war games have been directed toward this end, particularly **Project Atlanta**, a congressionally mandated effort exploring new technologies and critical organizational and command and control issues involved in military support to civil authority. Ongoing efforts include the development of a **Critical Infrastructure Disruption Guide (CIDG)** in collaboration with HQMC PP&O and the Naval Operations Other Than War (OOTW) Center at Dahlgren for use by operating forces engaged in urban operations, both Homeland Defense and overseas. The Guide is a compendium of knowledge that provides visual/graphic and written descriptions of key infrastructure elements and how they integrate. It includes methods of destroying or degrading these infrastructure elements through the minimal use of force is detailed in this document and is optimized for small military units with conventional capabilities, or small non-military groups using field expedients to accomplish the task. This product is currently awaiting the development of a railway infrastructure module.
- The Homeland Defense program also supports various activities incident to CG, MCCDC’s responsibilities as CG,

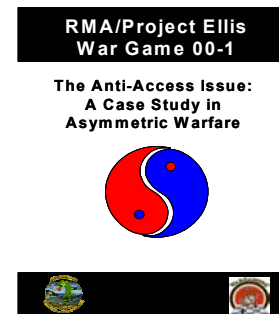
Marine Corps National Capital Region Command (MCNCRC), as well as the security dimensions of the Marine Corps Marathon. For example, the *Marine Corps Marathon Tabletop Exercise (MCMEX 04)* was initiated in October 2004 in conjunction with the Marine Corps Marathon Office. It brought together a broad spectrum of key professionals from the National Capital Region (NCR), federal agencies, and DOD for a staff-training war game shaped around simulated responses to scenario-based incidents. Planning for *MCMEX 05* is expected to commence in August 05.

- Additionally, Homeland Defense has emerged as a major component of JFCOM's overall Joint Urban Operations (JUO) effort. In that context, there may be applications to the *Joint Urban Warrior* Program, as well as broader engagement under the JUO umbrella.
- Finally, this effort integrates with the activities of the National Institute for Urban Search and Rescue (NIUSR), an organization of First Responders heavily engaged in issues of military support to civil authority.

**The Industry War Game Series** is conducted in conjunction with the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA). This program helps maintain a dialogue with industry, facilitates a larger role for industry in Marine Corps events, and leverages the considerable expertise of the defense industry in addressing key expeditionary capabilities issues. As examples, the 2003 NDIA War Game focused on Enhanced Networked Seabasing, the 2004 effort addressed Joint Forcible Entry Operations (JFEO), and the 2005 war game (Jun 05)

considered Distributed Operations.

**Exploratory/Futures Gaming** is a long-range, open-ended effort to explore future and emerging operational concepts, organizations, technology, and "strategic futures," among other topics.



The first component of this effort is *Project Ellis*, which examines pivotal shifts in the strategic landscape that may result in major changes to US military strategy and the role of the Marine

Corps. *Project Ellis* has examined, through workshops and war games, such issues as changing strategic assumptions, asymmetric warfare, counter anti-access strategies, and the impact of quantum technology shifts.

Current *Project Ellis* efforts are focused on supporting the war on terrorism; more specifically *Project O'Bannon* and *Expeditionary Warrior*.